1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

rejoice, for they know that Kuma, the goddess creator of all things, is content with them and is sending them a greeting in token thereof. On the wings of the wind comes the roar of the araguatos.

But life starts in the east and ends in the west. The day is done and the night comes on. The Yaruros turn to face the east to watch the beginning of star travel and also the fiery appearance of the moon and its transformation to a chaste white. The sands glisten and above flash "falling stars", but the Yaruros say that these are messengers of Kuma doing their errands.

Then the women roll cigars, light them, and pass them to their men. Everyone smokes and there is great contentment. There is reluctance to stand up, so if a woman has to fetch some object, say a firebrand, she will crawl on all fours, looking not unlike some large but indescribably graceful ape.

When several stars of the big dipper have appeared the women rise in a body and walk into the darkness west of the camp. They disappear from sight and hearing. What mysteries they perform they only know. The men are left alone and they talk about heaven. The children play merrily.

The women return and quietly take their places, ready to prepare more cigars. It is good to lie naked on the sand looking at the sky, listening to nature's symphony. With the same persistent effortless rhythm of the pulse beat the world outside of the individual is felt. There is the merry laughter of the children and the soft, deep, contented gurgle of the women; the soft voice of the shaman painting religious pictures, explaining existence; the murmur of the wind as a background to the calls of night birds, and the blowing of toninos, the splash of frolicsome fishes, the intermittent howl of the monkeys, the bark of the wolf, the roar of the jaguar; and the warmth of a full stomach.

A figure may detach itself from the camp shadows and disappear in the darkness of the west. Several young men may afterwards take the same path—to join the shaman in his preparations for communion with the gods. They leave behind them a feeling of expectation but nothing is said. Someone has put up a bare pole where the sand is hard packed.

The shaman returns and goes to sit in front of the pole facing the east. He sits quietly and alone in deep reverie. Later he may ask for a cigar. His wife will supply him with one.

After a period of contemplation he may begin to sing and dance. His people will join him. The music will become more and more animated, the singing and dancing will be done with increasing abandon. The stars and the moon will go their ways to rest in the west. It is only when the sun peeps over the eastern horizon that they will

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

181 up and down the rivers in their canoes, or lying on the sand, feasting on crocodile or turtle. He would see stolid fixed faces, uncommunicative, affrighted. But if this traveler were to stay he would discover that from sundown to sunrise the Yaruro lives in an intensive romantic world which he cannot and rarely would care to share with anyone else.

576 787 821 We returned from the trip to La Urbana at sundown when bars of yellow, blue, and white light streaked the western sky. The Yaruros were sitting on the sands watching this phenomenon with a certain rapture. They sat quietly and in silence facing the west until the lights had faded and merged into a subdued golden glow. Then Landaeta came and greeted me affectionately. He spoke of what we had just seen in the western sky, explaining that it represented a greeting from the mother goddess Kuma, to her children the Yaruros and to me. The other men came also, and the women too put their arms about me, but the latter kept their faces averted as is proper in Yaruro culture. We settled ourselves on the sands. Small fires were burning with remnants of turtles and crocodiles broiling over them. The sands glistened in the moonlight that soon came upon us. Araguato monkeys roared in the distance. An occasional bird sang. Insects hummed. Toninos frolicking in the water came up to blow lustily. And Landaeta explained that these animals were also children of Kuma and that everyone in Kuma's world was glad that I had returned.

553 123 We smoked and Landaeta talked, recounting what his gods had told him about me; that now I was one of their family, and he affectionately called me "adjimai oteh" (elder brother), which became the standard form of address by all of his people. In return I was asked to call them little brother and little sister.

791 791 533 At a point Landaeta rose and walked away into the darkness. His son and nephew followed him soon afterwards. He returned after an absence of half and hour, wearing his shaman's ceremonial cap and breechclout. He went to sit on the clean white sands to the east of the camp, where he remained still and quiet for a long time. His wife went to him with a lighted cigarette. He smoked this in silence and alone. Finally he made a sign and his son and nephew rose immediately to plant a pole a few feet in front of him, and then retired again into the darkness. After some time Landaeta rose, and facing the east in front of the pole, continued to smoke in silence. It seemed a long time before he began to sing, softly and hesitantly, which time was measured by the rising of the stars. After he had finished two songs his wife approached him again, thrusting into the ground, close to the pole, a stick from which hung a small basket. Landaeta continued standing, facing the east and singing, pausing briefly between

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

songs. His nephew went to stand behind him; his son went forward to stand at the left shoulder of his cousin. These two boys joined in the singing, repeating Landaeta's song stanza after stanza. A few women, led by Landaeta's wife and daughter, went to stand at his right side, and joined the boys in answering the songs of the shaman. They stood there in front of the pole singing until the Southern Cross hung high in the sky. Then Landaeta's wife took a gourd rattle from the basket and gave it to her husband, who immediately began to shake it, its liquid tone blending harmoniously with the voices. The singers became more animated when they heard the rattle, and soon they began to dance, jerking the body forward and backward, rhythmically and in unison. At times Landaeta would shake his rattle violently and his voice would betray his deep excitement. His wife from time to time would give a lighted cigarette to him, holding it to his mouth until it was consumed. At midnight the shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more violent, and finally, in the middle of one song, everyone began to move around the pole. The women put their right hands on the shoulder of the one ahead, and soon were running and stamping the right foot as they did so. The men formed an inner circle, dancing one behind the other. At the end of each song they paused for a moment lined up in their original positions. As the night wore on, both singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman appeared to be in a frenzy. His voice rose in pitch, his rhythm was faster, and more strongly accentuated, and all sang with greater feeling. The shaman danced in jerky movements, bending and twisting his body, half spinning about, first one way then the other, until he seemed to be quivering all over. The dance around the pole became almost a mad run, made more difficult by the soft sands and the complex movements of the body. The men would leap high and as the right foot was stamped in unison, a resonant beat was produced that seemed to blend with the pulsating roar of the howlers brought to us by the wind, and marked off by the rich rattling of the gourd and the choral singing. In the morning hours the wind rose again, blew more violently, and the roar of the monkeys became stronger, and the Yaruros sang passionately. It was then, when the morning star was already high, and dawn lighted the eastern horizon, that they stopped.

The sun awoke me, and though I had slept barely two hours I felt quite refreshed. I sat up to look about me. There was the vast stretch of sand, the fringe of jungle, and the sparkling river. My Yaruros were sleeping half buried in the sand, behind basketry to shelter themselves from the wind. The vultures were already at the piles of refuse, feasting on crocodiles and turtles. Soon the sun awoke my friends, and they too sat up to gaze quietly at the western sky where they believe their gods live.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

821 formations held a deep fascination for them. I understood but little of it, for their Spanish was too broken, and I was unfamiliar with Yaruro. So we spent the evening in quiet conversation and amity, conscious of the soft voices of the women in the background, children, laughter, and always the throbbing roar of the distant bands of 825 howlers which was brought to us by the wind. To the Yaruros the howlers were formerly men.

Landaeta relayed to me questions uppermost in his wife's mind. Did I have a wife in my own country? Did I have any children? Why had they not come with me? Once in Brazil I had been asked similar questions by another naked primitive fold, and I had answered truthfully that I had neither wife nor children. I remember their confusion and amazement. In their eyes I was a great man, and therefore I should have had many wives and many children. It is certain that they really never believed or understood my answer. So, in this case, not wanting to make extensive explanations about our civilization, which not only does not insist that men and women marry, but even makes it very difficult for them to do so, I lied, answering that I was married and had one son. Of course I had to describe both wife and boy to the inquisitive women. They wanted to know if her skin was the same color as mine, and her hair as white as mine, and what did she wear on her body? Also, they made me 784 promise that some day I would bring my wife and boy to them, so that the women who, because of social taboos, could not converse directly with me, would be able to do so with my wife.

821 As we talked of these things, falling stars played in the heavens, "messengers of Kuma" according to the Yaruros, the big dipper swung higher, and the southern crosses began their journeys. For a while the wind died down, and the monkeys were heard no more. Always responsive to the world in which they live, the Yaruros became silent and still. And then, as the moon rose above the hills of Guiana, Landaeta disappeared in the darkness to return later and begin his singing.

796 Unlike our own religious ceremonies, there was no attempt at creating artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily under 781 the very nose of the shaman without reproof, and the adults talked happily. The imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions and no restraints were put on normal and natural behavior before joyous events.

533 There was no dancing on this night, in deference to me, for I could not participate in it, but we sat in a semicircle and sang after the shaman.

787 Itciai arrived and I was helped to sit close to the shaman. Appar-791 ently Itciai was talking about me, referred to as "the Man." I lighted a cigarette and held it to the shaman's mouth. Without interrup-

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

601 marriage she called also "nyowuh", are referred to as "keramai". The father-in-law calls his son-in-law "haiméma'", which means "the one my daughter married", and the son-in-law calls his father-in-law "huíteh". His mother-in-law, whom he never addresses directly, he [606] refers to as "kaikamúe". The girl refers to her father-in-law as "kuinté". Before marriage the boy would have called his uncle, the brother of his mother, "húidemái".

616 There do not seem to be any rites or ceremonies from which members of the opposite moiety are excluded. According to my informants, the Puaná clan moiety is preeminent over the Itciai moiety, therefore the person recognized as its head is considered to be the [578] chief of the Yaruros. There is no resentment, as far as I was able to learn, to this arrangement. Primarily, I suppose, because the biological descendants of an individual pass from one moiety to another and therefore share in its prerogatives. The Yaruros' social concepts in respect to moiety membership is best expressed by reciprocal duties, obligations, and prerogatives. Under the elementary local system the son-in-law is almost a guest among his wife's people with whom he goes to live. During the rainy season when more permanent shelters are built, according to my informants, they have more ceremonies, during one of which the unmarried boys of one moiety then sit in the house of the other moiety.

616 Although there is no exclusion of the members of the opposite
● 796 moiety in the ceremonies, if the shaman is of the Puaná moiety,
791 those that sit closest to him are members of his own moiety. But even in this case the other moiety is represented, and in fact indirectly serves him. His own wife sits at his right and it is she who assists him when her help is needed by handing to him the various pieces of his paraphernalia and tobacco. It is she, likewise, who prepares the various drinks. The rest of the members of her moiety, if they happen to be present, take their places following the members of the shaman's moiety.

604 When a man is undertaking a hunt or wishes to build a canoe he
476 calls on his nephews, that is, his sister's sons, for help, and they are obligated to be at his service. This obligation and service, which begins as soon as the boy begins to understand his position in the society, lasts a lifetime. When the uncle or uncles become too feeble to hunt for themselves it is these nephews who supply them with food and everything else they may need. This service may be interpreted as compensation to the uncles for their daughters who become the wives of these youths. But there was no indication that it was so considered by the Yaruro.

593 h. A man, therefore, does not have the services nor the social life of
604 his children, but has to look to his sister's womb for individuals to educate and to assist him.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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123 women sang to me and for me, I was not able to learn anything about their conceptions of the universe nor any other matter.

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302 On one occasion Landaeta, the shaman, invited Juan Bario's band to participate in a performance. The women prepared for it by painting the face with stamped designs—stamps smeared with oily stuff, stamped on the face, then the entire face, from eyebrows down, was covered with a thick coat of red ocher. It stuck where the grease was. The hair was worn in one braid down the back. They wore their best dresses.

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123 In anticipation of a long night, I lay down on the sands to rest, if possible. However, the skies interested the Yaruros. Landaeta and his people lay beside me to talk about the heavens. From that we passed to a discussion of Hatchawa, who, according to Landaeta, had said that I was well known to him and a good friend. In order to test the shaman I told him that I was anxious about my family whom I had left so long ago, and I asked him to find out about my wife, son, and general family from Hatchawa, which he promised to do. The conversation went back to the stars, and as the big dipper began to rise over the northern horizon Landaeta disappeared in the darkness. Soft conversation continued, and then came Juan Bario and his family to join us.

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[252] A few words of warm friendship with Juan Bario and we went to joint Landaeta, who was sitting ready to begin. Landaeta had withdrawn to the west of the camp, and put on his shamanistic breechclout and head-cloth, which consisted of a sort of headkerchief. His son Brigido sat behind him; to the right of Landaeta sat Brigida, his wife, and next to her, her sister. Juan Bario and I sat back a little.

Unlike our own religious ceremonies, there was no attempt at artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily, without reproof, under the very nose of the shaman, some of the men jested and laughed, others conversed more quietly, etc. In other words, the imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions, and no restraints were placed on the normal and natural behavior.

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791 Landaeta began to sing and he was accompanied by a few of the attendants. In the meanwhile small fires had appeared here and there, and at these were lighted the long green leaf-covered cigars. None smoked an entire cigar, following the general custom of sharing with the other fellow. The songs at first were accompanied with faint rattling of the macaua, but this became stronger and stronger as the shaman approached the Land of Kuma. Finally at midnight—almost on the stroke—the shaman announced in his song that he had reached the desired land. The singing became more intense, faster, and everyone seemed to take more interest.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

Up to this time his son and his wife had been attending him, with Isidoro, called grandchild, but actually a son of a first cousin, Fernando, singing to the left of Brigido (son) helping out. Brigida's special care was the tobacco. She would light a cigar and hold it to the shaman's mouth, who took tremendous pulls on it, raising clouds of smoke, until only a stub was left. This was generally finished by several. The son would go to the left of the shaman and offer him caroto—crushed maize in water. He drank it in one suck, leaving nothing behind. Sometimes Matilde, the shaman's sister-in-law, offered the cigar. When necessary, Brigido (son) or the "grandchild" took up the song and carried it, repeating the same verses, until the shaman was ready to resume the lead.

A little after midnight I noticed that a man and woman embraced the shaman and offered him cigars and drink. Inquiry produced the fact that the spirit of their dead father had come to visit us, and so not only did they embrace it but they offered it caroto and tobacco. From this moment on the shaman was with us only in body. More and more dead Yaruros came to visit us, and practically everyone embraced the shaman and made offerings.

The singing never stopped, the rattle was shaken violently from now on, and the shaman, without changing rhythm or song, would announce what spirit had arrived. The spirit's relative mostly concerned would then embrace the shaman and make offering. They were, of course, embracing the relative. The spirit gave messages also. In this way all of the dead Yaruros visited us. The shaman announced that Itciai was coming, though he was beyond the dead Yaruros. The singing became more and more animated, almost frenzied.

Itciai arrived and Juan Bario told me to go with him to the shaman. Apparently Itciai was talking about me, referred to as *the man*. We greeted Itciai by embracing the shaman. I had the thought of lighting a cigarette and through Juan offered it. Without interrupting the song it was smoked in the shamanistic or rather spirit style, and Itciai began to explain who I was. He said that he knew me well, that I had visited Kuma's land many times, that I was a shaman; that my family was well, that my wife was waiting for me and that my son was so anxious he began to fear that I was dead. He said that there was something big being saved for me until I reached my country. I was a Puneh, a good man, and a man like the Yaruros; that he was glad I liked the Yaruros so much, and that he was glad I was living with them. I had nothing to fear, since on my death I would go to Kuma's land. Itciai was saving for me a beautiful large horse, all ready for me to ride.

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During this song discourse from Itciai about me, which lasted about one hour and which was translated to me only in fragmentary fashion, at the beginning of a new thought the shaman often would shake the rattle violently before my face and continue the same frenzied tone and shaking throughout. The people likewise sang lustily with feeling; a great compliment to me.

Itciai had something to say about the Yaruros in general; namely, that they were doomed to die, but that a better world and life awaits them with Kuma. They will have horses and cattle, clothing, tobacco, all foods and aguardiente; they will be born again there, young and strong. This world will come to an end because the Yaruros are being killed off.

Later Hatchawa called. I had a cigarette ready for him. He appreciated it and asked the shaman why I didn't drink caroto, to go ahead and have a drink. I was a Pumeh. He acknowledged my acquaintance in my own land and in Kuma's, and expressed deep affection for me. He brought good news of my family, saying to hurry back since my wife was waiting for me, and had been waiting for me with much love for a long time. He got another cigarette and I was embraced several times.

The next to come was the father of Juan Bario, and as soon as I heard of it I offered a cigarette. It was properly acknowledged and the people were told that indeed I knew a great deal, since I had cigarettes ready to greet the spirits.

About 3 in the morning came Puaná, expressly to greet me. He told the Yaruros that I lived on another land which he himself had made and that he was glad I had come to visit this land. Such a greeting obviously called for a gift of three or four cigarettes which I held to the shaman's mouth. He described my land as being like that of Kuma—high and beautiful, different from this. That my people were gentle "people" like the Yaruros, Pumeh. He gave me further news of my family and said that he was keeping for me much cattle and many horses in the land of Kuma.

Puaná was greeted with happy laughter and general approval, as demonstrated by the quality of the singing which took on extra intensity and loudness. Puaná stayed with us for about an hour and a half, talking most of the time about me.

Finally about 5 o'clock Kuma herself came to visit me and, like Hatchawa, offered me a drink. I had to drink a gourd full of the concoction, it being held to my lips until I finished it. She gave messages similar to the others. There was a long spell when Kuma talked to Juan Bario, the son-in-law of Landaeta, who kept feeding Kuma with many cigars and caroto. Finally other Yaruros came, and the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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787 shaman eventually returned to us, being fed and greeted with affection by all.

The singing stopped at 6 o'clock. A number of rather remarkable facts are to be emphasized.

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796 1. By actual count the shaman sang no less than 3,000 musical phrases and verses and about 800 stanzas without any breaks or rest, ever changing the words, and subject matter, and jumping from one thing to another at a very fast tempo. How the shaman could make up his verses so quickly, while the people repeated the previous verse, is not easy to understand.

2. He shook the rattle without ceasing a moment, with the same sidewise motion of the hand, most violently for nine and a half hours.

[516] 3. He sat in the same posture—left leg doubled under him, right leg in cross-leg position, for the entire time. Not once did he move.

[276] 4. He smoked the long cigars with the thick leaves without taking them out of his mouth, producing so much smoke that I choked and my eyes smarted from it. He must have smoked at least 75 of them, and probably over a hundred. He smoked 35 cigarettes, in addition, in the same way.

[273] 5. He drank about 2 gallons of unfermented crushed maize in water.

The music was spirited and had a swing with the emphasis on the off beat that is as effective, if not more so, than the negro spiritual.

After the all-night singing there was a lull in the morning, everyone snatching a wink of sleep, but by the time I had finished writing and medicating my foot the men crowded around to tell me of the night's experiences. At noon the women started singing, sitting in their hammocks, and they kept this up until late in the day. They were singing mostly about me. I noticed that their songs seemed to be of a simpler sort and more monotonous than those of the men, generally consisting of one verse repeated over and over again to form the stanza. [198] They sang in the women's language.

JUAN BARIO ON THE EVENTS OF THE NIGHT

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776 Panemé Tsió brought a horse for the shaman to go to Kuma's house. Panemé Tsió is represented as a sort of "boss" of the figurines found in the sanda. Then came the father of Fernando. He said that they should live well here and warned him not to mistreat his wife (talking to son-in-law). Then came the father of Brigida. He said that the new wife of his grandson should treat her husband well and vice versa. Then came a brother of Brigida. He said that he is wealthy in Kuma's land, possessing cattle and horses. Then came the mother of Brigida. She counseled her grandchild not to

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

787 Then came the father of Juan Bario on horseback. He said:

115 "I greet you. I am waiting for you. Your land is poor now but Kuma's land
[539] is good and rich. When you die you will be born in Kuma's land. I was living here with you, I died here, but I was alone in Kuma's land where I am wealthy. See, you are poor. I was the same way. It is different in Kuma's land. There is much cattle and horses. Live well with your wife. Treat her well. Kuma does not want you to do otherwise."

533 Then the shaman returned on horseback.

There is great reluctance on the part of the shaman to sing unless there is a strong reason for it. During my stay with the Yaruros many occasions presented themselves to justify the holding of shamanistic performances.

796 On one occasion I returned to camp after an absence of two days.
791 This was enough. I arrived at their camp about 7.30 in the evening. Landaeta greeted me affectionately and then told me that he and his people considered me a member of the family. The women came to put their arms about me in greeting. Landaeta in one of his mystical moods talked of the beauty of the small fire with turtle roasting; of the sands glistening in the moonlight; the araguato monkeys which were roaring in the distance; the occasional birds that sang in the night; the toninos came up to blow and splash in the river. All of this fitted in with the soft murmur of women speaking, and laughing in the darkness. An occasional misfortune, such as dropping a sackful of stuff, brought merry laughter on everybody's part. The crunching
[276] of the sand gave notice that the women were digging deep to reach moist sand in which to bury the leaves to be used as cigar covers. Soon all of us, men, women, and children, were smoking.

The rest of Landaeta's people arrived in canoes. They sat on the sand with us. Landaeta talked with them at length. At a point he arose. His wife handed him some objects. He walked away to the west, immediately followed by one of his sons and a young nephew. He returned after a while, minus his trousers, wearing the shaman's breechclout and cap.

He went to sit alone at the bottom of the sand bank. After some time his wife gave him a cigar. He continued to sit alone and silent. At a sign his son and nephew took a slender pole and planted it in the sand. They retired. Men and women continued talking. After some time Landaeta rose, stood before the pole, smoking, facing it and the east. Several stars began to rise.
796 He stood in front of the pole for some time. Then he weakly began
791 to sing. After two songs his wife came to plant a shorter pole to the
533 west of the long one, and hung from it a basket. Landaeta continued standing still and singing, pausing briefly between songs. His son went to stand behind him, his nephew at the left side of the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

796 791 533 son. They began to take up the songs—shaman sang one phrase, repeated it, sang at low pitch and repeated. Last repetition joined in by assistants (attendants) and then the four phrases would be repeated, the shaman remaining quiet, but immediately singing a new phrase when they had hardly finished it. A few women joined in a line side by side to the south of the shaman. Singing without a rattle and without dancing continued for about an hour. Then 796 791 535 one of the women went to the basket and brought the shaman the rattle. Singing continued. The only motion was a slow bending forward and bending of the knees by the women in unison—that is, rhythmically on the off beat. A few of the men did the same. Shaman would shake his rattle at times. At the end of one song he said "amen" and the women walked away to the west. When he began a new song they returned. His wife from time to time brought the shaman a cigar from the basket. A fire was started to the west of the pole and the women clustered around. The shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more energetic, and in the middle of one song the women and all began dancing. Women put right hand on left shoulder of one in front and walked anticlockwise around the pole. An inner circle was formed by the men walking one behind the other. Animation was slight, but the right foot was stamped on the off beat. After going around a few times they would stop in original position to finish the song.

This dance was varied a little later on.

In the course of the evening, the singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman was in a frenzy. High-pitched voice, faster rhythm, greater accentuation, more feeling. Shaking of rattle became more frequent, rhythm became faster. Shaman no longer stood still, but danced at first by a jerky movement for ward, bending the knees, then moving about, half spinning, and near the end his body seemed to quiver jerkingly and rhythmically. The women's motions became more and more accentuated and near the end men and women bent low at the waist, moving body up and down, bending legs at the knees. The walk around the pole became a fast run, with a hopping step on the right foot in unison. In this way—the men would leap high—a resonating beat was produced, accentuating the liquid rich rattle of the gourd and the choral singing.

This continued until 4 in the morning, becoming more and more frenzied, until the morning star appeared.

I regret that I fell asleep near the end. When I awoke at sunrise everyone was asleep, apparently completely exhausted.

535 They started facing northeast in front of the pole, the women to the right of the shaman. When standing still the women, with arms

1: Petrullo E-S (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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1. Clothes to the Yaruros mean protection from the cold at night and a mark of being "civilized." It is not often that they are able to secure new cloth. Generally they fall heir to cast-off garments. 2. At the end of a 9-hour performance during which he smoked countless cigars, drank "corote," and ate tcupah, a narcotic, Landaeta, the shaman of the Capanapero Yaruros, waits quietly for the sun to rise. His wife, who attended him all night, is seated at his right. 3. Landaeta, wearing a head cloth, with his people seated around him before sunrise. The women are at the left, the men at the right of the picture.

(End Plate 5)

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

776 775 return to earth and guide the community. In this manner, Ku'man is a center of gravity of the Yaruro ideological life. She is the center of a communications network which ties the Yaruro of the hither-world, those of the other-worlds, and the gods all in one continuous system of personal and social relations. This is somewhat the position of the spokesman or 'capitan' in the community life of the Yaruro, though he has proportionally much less influence in his village than Ku'man has in her universe. [622]

775 776 772 In sum, the gods and the dead are conceptualized as continuous with those of us on earth. Conceptually they appear to constitute the two highest steps in the age levels: infant, child, young adult, elder, the dead, and the gods. The last four classes are increasingly instrumental in teaching the ethics of living in tranquility, of respect and deference to one's spouse and to all members of one's people, and in teaching the values of the community. They exhort but never compel the community to follow these ideals. These precepts are followed not only among the egalitarian gods in their autonomous other-world communities, but in the personal and social relations between the gods and the hither-world *pumé*. The relations between men and gods, the communication between the hither- and other-worlds, the cosmography itself, all show quite clearly that there is no separation of "natural" and "supernatural" as discrete classes of events. The cosmos, society, and man are a single system in Yaruro thought. [771]

796 771 The nexus through which the flow of life in the other-world and the ongoing rhythm of daily life in the hither-world are meshed into a single system is the religious ceremony, the *tonghé*. Some description of the *tonghé* will afford us further insight into Yaruro ideology.

796 756 787 During the night-long *tonghés*, the entire community sits behind the shaman, ranged roughly by age levels. The women sit to his right, the men to his left. At dusk he begins to sing as he starts his journey to the land of Ku'man through the dark, cold land of Kiberó, the toad who gave man fire. In hundreds of improvised verses and melodies, he describes his journey, and then, after his arrival about midnight, his adventures in the lands of Ku'man and subsequently of the other gods. In each verse, the shaman sings an intonation which the entire community repeats in an identical antiphon. Thus the full experience of the shaman is transmitted to and shared by every member of the community. All is public; there is no secret knowledge. The shaman urges his people to sing with him and the other-worldly beings, to share in the responsibilities and joys of the community in supporting their individual members whether the shaman in his journey or the sick person for whom the *tonghé* may be being held. At the same time, in Ku'man land, he urges the other-worldly beings to come to advise his people and teach them. Later, the verses are no longer sung by the shaman, but rather by the dead and the gods who arrive in the husk of the shaman which he has left behind as a channel of communications for the other-worldly beings while his divisible self travels abroad. As these beings arrive in the shaman's husk, all members of the community may greet them by putting their arms around them or giving them cigarettes or drink. This is done separately by women, sometimes in groups, and by men. Throughout the ceremony the chief link between the sexually divided community is the shaman or the gods in the shaman's husk upon whom both sexes are focusing [757] [776]

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their attention. The shaman's position as link is emphasized by the fact that his wife invariably sits next to him during the *tonghés* to minister to him and to supply him cigarettes and drink. Thus, the socio-economic link of the household is also the unique link between the sexes in ceremonial life.

The various forms of socio-economic and ceremonial division of the sexes is even more remarkably underscored by the existence of female shamanism. As one might expect, shamanesses behave differently from shamans. Shamanesses sing only in the day-time. They, like Ku'man, sing from hammocks whereas men sing sitting on the ground or dancing. Furthermore, messages trasmitted to them from Ku'man are sent only to them, though the men hear and understand them. The men listen to these messages with care and respect and with the air that there are things to be learned from them which they would otherwise not hear. The shamanesses cannot receive male gods or their messages. Female shamanism seems to be an affirmation of the kin-bonds of the matri-centered local group as well as a means of asserting the values and rights pertaining to the women's world. The women's experience ideologically, as well as socially and biologically, is recognized as being systematically distinct from men's experience in life.

Behavior in the *tonghés* is very relaxed. Villagers laugh, joke, sleep, play, get up, walk about. Sometimes persons may even fail to attend if they have chosen to go to work the next day. The only thing explicitly forbidden, because Ku'man would consider it most indelicate, is sexual intercourse. Otherwise, the lack of formalism and freedom of individual behavior so often noted before is again found here.

The importance of the *tonghés* as the foremost way of reinforcing social relations and communal values as well as for curing is seen in several ways. First, when there has been no *tonghé* for several days, one begins to feel and hear a bruiting for *another* tonghé. It is felt that much time has elepsed since the last *tonghé*. Someone asks what's wrong that we haven't had a *tonghé* in so long. Another says we need a *tonghé*. Rumors of *tonghé* begin to be heard. By the fifth or sixth day another *tonghé* is held and community bonds are again reasserted. Again, the sexual division of labor and social life observed in the other- and hither-worlds is systematically carried through into religious observances. We have mentioned the seating of men separate from women and the separate greetings given to the gods. This theme is carried still further in the exclusive women's shamanism and the equally exclusive capacity of men to do curing, either as shamans or as purely private individuals.

The *tonghé* illuminates much about Yaruro ideology. First, shamans both male and female are not considered authorities possessed of special gifts and prerogatives who interpret lore for the entire community. Rather they are considered merely the comunity religious spokesmen for the public expression of community values and for curing, who, by their own choice, enjoy and are willing to undertake the long, arduous work of training and practice. They reaffirm community bonds by repeating in endless verses the precepts and knowledge contained in the Yaruro ideology. All knowledge and all experience is, at least potentially, open to all members of the community and even the private or personal experience of each is made known to all. Any member of

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the community may do the shaman's work if he chooses, just as any can travel to the other-world or commune with the gods, although, because of age, temperament, or individual taste, not every one does so. There were, in fact, two shamans among the nine men of the writer's village, as well as a number of men who cured and who occasionally sang verse intonations in the *tonghés* although they were not shamans. The shamans are no more than respected community members outside the ceremony. Here again we observe the egalitarianism and individual self-determinism which is so much a pattern of this culture.

The *tonghé* also clearly shows the relationships which prevail between men and gods. The shamans and the other adults of the village converse with the gods in great mutual respect. They do not manipulate them nor minister to them, nor implore them. Before the gods, they are in a position corresponding to active and adept junior members of the village before their elders and especially their lineal ascendants. Furthermore, in a very real sense, no individual person, *qua* person, deals with the gods. The community, with its religious catalyst, the shaman, is the unit of action. The only individual relations with the gods occur in dreams, unconsciousness, and death. Dreams about gods are made public by singing aloud in sleep, the experience of unconsciousness is recounted publicly, and death, too, becomes public because the dead man is accessible through the *tonghés*.

The directness of contact between man and gods again emphasizes the unity of cosmos, society, and man. Within this unity, the sharp division of a male sphere from a female sphere is found. These quite coordinate spheres, in the other-worlds as in the hither-world, in religion as in socio-economic life, are linked through the household.

In conclusion, I would like briefly to review the major dimensions of Yaruro ideology. We may state these as a set of propositions, each presenting a major dimension of the ideology.

1. Cosmic structure. *The cosmos is static, limited, concrete, and internally continuous in that no barriers separate man and his society in the physical world from the nonphysical world.* The parts of the universe together form a rather rigid, symmetrical, architectonic structure, although each individual Yaruro may vary the description of the whole to suit his particular taste. All parts are of roughly coordinate importance. The major motions of nature, such as thunder and lightning, the revolutions of sun and moon, are often embodied, personalized, and independently operating entities, moved by semi-human motivations.

2. The good. *Goodness inheres generally in the cosmos as a system. The goodness manifests itself in understood causes and concretely and describably known parts of the cosmos which, whether places, persons, or things, are given exact locations.* Conversely all known and localizable objects, persons, or places and understood causes are generally good.

3. The not-good. *Evil, which is not polar to good, finds its locus in specific persons, things, or events inside or outside the cosmos, and is manifest in specific results. The underlying causes of evil, however, are inac-*